



The Marker Lamp



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Lone Star Region Call Board

The Marker Lamp

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EDITOR

RILEY TRIGGS

1005 Robert E Lee Rd
Austin, Texas 78704-2026
512.636.3521
rileytriggs@gmail.com

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

GERT "SPEED" MULLER
gertmul@gmail.com

BOB BATSON

bobbatson48@gmail.com

ADVERTISING

DONNA ORR

2625 Rolling Meadows Dr.
Rockwall, TX 75087
972.342.8598
dlo-ris@sbcglobal.net

Visit the LSR's web page at:
www.lonestarregion.com

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Address all correspondence, news, photos and drawings to the editor. All material will be gladly accepted and will be used depending on the availability of space and suitability of material. None will be returned unless a stamped, self-addressed envelope is provided. Correspondence relating to Pike Ads and Dealer Ads should be addressed to Donna Orr, 2625 Rolling Meadows Dr., Rockwall, TX 75087 (972) 722-4769 dlo-ris@sbcglobal.net

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by Roy Stockard*

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LSR Officers

PRESIDENT
STEVE BARKLEY, MMR
2060 Belvedere Drive
Beaumont, Texas 77706
(210) 653-5947
baylormax@aol.com

VICE-PRESIDENT
BOB BARNETT
2925 Plumb Street
Houston, Texas 77005
(713) 660 8820
Barnett6@sbcglobal.net

SECRETARY
JEFF PALMER
2806 High Plateau Dr.
Garland, Texas 75044
(972) 495-2097
res06wqv@gte.net

BOARD ADVISOR
BILL MCPHERSON
4402 Vista Creek Dr.
Rowlett, TX 75088
(972) 463-9721
tpbill@verizon.net

TREASURER
DONNA ORR
2625 Rolling Meadows Dr.
Rockwall, TX 75087
(972) 722-4769
dlo-ris@sbcglobal.net

SECRETARY-EMERITUS
EUNICE LINDA
3028 Cumberland
Waco, Texas 76707-1219
(254) 754-5535
linda@hot.rr.com

LSR Directors-At-Large

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
DUANE RICHARDSON, MMR
1122 Holland Drive
Garland, Texas 75040
(972) 495-6375 E-mail:
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
CHUCK LIND, MMR
3680 CR 324
Navasota, Texas 77868
(979) 219-3305
Chucklind46@gmail.com

DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE
ART HOUSTON
209 Sugar Highland Blvd.
Houma, Louisiana 70360
(504) 723-9290
ahouston3@charter.net

LSR Division Directors

(1) COWCATCHER DIVISION
CHRIS ATKINS
1633 Parkside Trail
Lewisville, Texas 75077
(214) 222-1285
chris@railroadmodelers.com

(2) BAYOU DIVISION
ROD FREDERICKS
640 Chippenham Dr.
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70808
(225) 766-8014
fredericks.rod@gmail.com

(3) TRINITY RIVER DIVISION
JERRY HOVERSON, MMR
52 COUNTRY RIDGE ROAD
MELISSA, TX 75454
(972) 540-5315
jkhoverson@gmail.com

(4) CEN-TEX DIVISION
PETER KAZMIR
2022 Foothills
Leander, TX 78641-2376
(512) 259-6720
pakazmir@gmail.com

(5) DIVISION
DAVE LAMBERTS
3717 95th Street
Lubbock, Texas 79423-3811
(806) 792-7244
DavidWL1944@aol.com

(6) DIVISION
KEVIN BERGEMAN
3318 Windy Ridge Ct
San Antonio, TX 78259-2607 (210)
488-4370
kevin.bergeman@gmail.com

(7) DIVISION
DON P. KIMMELL
9132 Mansfield Road
Shreveport, Louisiana 71118
(318) 798-7718
elf4kcs@mac.com

(8) TEXAS GULF DIVISION
JIM LEMMOND
2821 Frostwood Circle
Dickinson, Texas 77539
281-534-6179
281-229-0845
jimlem@verizon.net



LSR Chairs

ACHIEVEMENT PROGRAM
DUANE RICHARDSON, MMR
1122 Holland Drive
Garland, TX 75040
(972) 495-6375
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

PUBLICATIONS- ML EDITOR
RILEY TRIGGS
1005 Robert E Lee Rd
Austin, Texas 78704
(512) 636-3521
rileytriggs@gmail.com

CONTEST CO-CHAIR
CHUCK LIND, MMR
3680 CR 324
Navasota, Texas 77868
(979) 219-3305
Chucklind46@gmail.com

CONVENTION
JACK MERKEL, MMR
2408 Whitewater Drive
Bertram, Texas 78605
(512) 355-3289
ElmerMerk@aol.com

HISTORIAN
JIM LONG, MMR
2404 Creek Ridge
Pearland, Texas 77581-5728
(281) 482-4987
(no email)

CONTEST CO-CHAIR
LOREN NEUFELD, MMR
9821 Oboe Dr.
Houston, Texas 77025
713-666-8451
lorenmr@aol.com

EVENTS
BILL DRYDEN
202 Tallwood Drive
Georgetown, Texas 78628
(469) 964-8571
bdr149@airmail.net

WEB SITE-PUBLIC RELATIONS
JEFF PALMER
2806 High Plateau Dr.
Garland, Texas 75044
(972) 495-2097
res06wqv@gte.net

NOMINATIONS CHAIR
BLAKE BOGS
8202 Pine Thistle
Spring, TX 77379
(281) 655-0177
superchief15@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP CO-CHAIRMAN
LARRY SWIGERT
6548 Clearhaven Circle
Dallas, Texas 75248
(972) 239-0909
LS4Results@aol.com

PARLIAMENTARIAN
JOHN GARFIELD
3013 Marquise Ct.
Burleson, TX 76028
(817) 653-3219
j-g.garfield@att.net

PHOTOGRAPHY CHAIR
DAVE LAMBERTS
3717 95th Street
Lubbock, Texas 79423-3811
(806) 792-7244
DavidWL1944@aol.com

MEMBERSHIP CO-CHAIRMAN
MIKE MACKAY
1700 Desperado Road
Fort Worth, TX 76131
214-460-1329
mikemackey_tx@sbcglobal.net

NON-RAIL
VIRGINIA FREITAG
1835 Alta Vista
Houston, Texas 77023-2503
(713) 926-2993
v-gfreitag@comcast.net

YOUTH CHAIR
DAVE CUMMINGS
6029 Van Buren St.
Groves, TX 77619-4825
(409) 962-1183
mr_cummings@sbcglobal.net



President's Message

by Steve Barkley, MMR
baylormax@aol.com

IT'S ELECTION TIME!

This year the LSR will elect directors for Divisions 2, 4, 6, 8, and the three at large directors. Here's the message from Blake Bogs, the LSR Election chair:

It's that time again. Yes, it's time to get out the pens and pencils, whip out a profile and run for office.

You know how you hate those LSR bureaucrats! Step up and send those bums home.

Available Offices:

Division 2 Director
Division 4 Director
Division 6 Director
Division 8 Director
Director-at-Large (3 positions)

The nomination period for the 2016 LSR Election has opened! This period will run until December 18, 2015.

If you wish to run, please contact me at superchief1520@gmail.com or call me at 713-254-7447. If you do not want to run, please vote in the 2016 election!

The incumbent at large directors and the Division 8 Director have already let Blake know that they will not run for re-election. So now is the time for you to let Blake know that you want to run.

Please consider running for one of the positions. If you are trying to qualify for your MMR, 3 years' service as a Director qualifies you for the Association Official Certificate.

Two meetings of Directors and LSR officers are held each year. The midyear meeting is normally held in late January or early February prior to that year's convention.

The meeting is held at the same hotel as that year's convention. The 2015 midyear meeting was held in Beaumont. My wife, Judy, and I hosted an operating session and dinner the night prior the meeting. We all had a great time!

The Annual Meeting is held during the annual convention. Traditionally the meeting is held on Sunday morning at the end of the convention.

FALL TRAIN SHOWS

Many train shows are held throughout the LSR in Fall and early Winter. Among many this year were the 2015 National Narrow Gauge Convention and the Galveston Railroad Museum annual show.

NATIONAL NARROW GAUGE CONVENTION

If you have never attended a national convention, go to one! I attended and helped out at the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Houston. I am not a narrow gauger, but I had a great time. Chuck Lind and Craig Brantley were convention chairmen. LSR Division 8 was a co-sponsor for the convention.

Clinics were presented by modelers from all over the United States and foreign countries. They included clinics on painting brass models, many different ways to model rust, operating a model railroad and many other topics. The entries in the model contests were amazing. Loren Neufeld and Jim Lemmond entered a On30 modular layout that took first place. It was loosely based on the movie Paint Your Wagon and included a town based on No Name City.

Vendors included sellers of tools, rock molds, P-B-L

and other manufacturers of models and modeling supplies, books, art and many other goodies. I found lots to purchase including soldering probes, flux, and tools from P-B-L and precolored ready to use rubber rock castings from Cripplebush Valley Models.

It does not matter what scale or railroad you model. You will find lots to see at any train related national level convention. Try one! You'll have fun!

GALVESTON RAILROAD MUSEUM TRAIN SHOW

The Galveston Railroad Museum held its annual train show October 3 and 4. About 1400 modelers, children (of all ages!) parents and grandparents attended. The show was held the first weekend in October and featured modular layouts, vendors, and the museum exhibits. This year was the third show since the museum reopened following Hurricane Ike. Attendance was an all-time high.

Texas Brick Railroad is a group of LEGO fans who model trains using LEGO's. Their display at the show completely filled a large room just off the main waiting room in the old Sante Fe Station where the museum is headquartered. Trains included passenger and freight trains, Sante Fe F units, and a Chesapeake and Ohio 2-6-6-6, all constructed out of LEGO's. Adults and children alike were mesmerized by the displays.

I'm told that the average LSR/NMRA member is 66 years old. Most of us are model railroaders because we were introduced to the hobby as children through Lionel and American Flyer. We continued with our hobby as adults with some of us switching to HO, N and other scales.

The LEGO modelers that I saw were mostly in their 40's. I suspect that they use LEGO to model trains as adults because they were first introduced to LEGO's as children, just as many of us were introduced to Lionel. So far the NMRA has not recognized LEGO as a Special Interest Group because LEGO is a single manufacturer. I personally believe that the NMRA should recognize and embrace those who model trains using LEGO's. Like Thomas the Tank Engine, LEGO's appeal to children. We may be missing a golden opportunity to recruit tomorrow's adult modelers to our hobby.

GO TO A TRAIN SHOW!

Find a show or layout tour in your area and go have fun! You'll meet friends, find great treasures to buy, and rekindle your enthusiasm for model railroading. Remember, *Model Railroading is Fun!* **ML**



The Meet

by Riley Triggs

rileytriggs@gmail.com

ponyrr.blogspot.com

Ever since I have been aware, the NMRA has not had an overly strong presence in the Austin area, but that is changing. My own experience suggests that modelers in our town were mostly lone wolves or a part of small groups centered around large layouts with only a little bit of overlap between groups. I went years without knowing about, much less seeing, most of the layouts in town because the activities were ad hoc. The only time to really see other layouts and talk to other model railroaders was the annual Austin Model Railroad Jamboree.

The revival of regular NMRA meetings by Jack Merkel a few years ago has stoked the sense of community and provided a springboard for more participation in the NMRA, myself included. That started the momentum in the division, and last year a new scheduling conflict disrupted our several decades old traditional fall gathering date forcing us to rethink our entire approach to sharing the hobby with each other and the general public. While this disruption has been bothersome, it has turned out to be a catalyst for good change and a strengthening of the division's commitment to serving and connecting our members.

Led by division director Peter Kazmir, CenTex is working towards a reorganized event calendar. For starters, one meet will be presented a year for only division members that is geared towards those already in the hobby and our model railroad community, and then a second public event will be presented with vendors, modular groups and beginner clinics geared towards bringing new people into the hobby and NMRA. There are a lot of details yet to be decided upon and worked out, but we've already put part of our plan in motion.

To begin with, this month CenTex presented a weekend meet in downtown Austin to make up for not being able to have our annual fall Jamboree event, and it provided an interesting glimpse towards potential future events.

While our annual Jamboree focused on vendors and the layout tour with a couple of clinics thrown in, this month's meet was more about bringing people of our division together to share and learn. We did have a home



Bill Dryden (right) and Mike Barrett (left) tune up rolling stock in between clinics.



CenTex member Jerry Wilson (left) and Norwegian visitor Einar Jensen (right) at my layout.

layout tour of over 20 layouts, but the day was really a learning event about railroads and model railroading.

The meet centered around five educational clinics. Jack Merkel spoke about the industries served by railroads of the Houston area, Tom Pearson revealed advanced features of DecoderPro, Duane Richardson shared how to improve models with his weathering and detailing techniques, Chuck Lind and Loren Neufeld offered their tips on trees and scenery, and I presented an NMRA EduTrain clinic by Mike Burgett on signaling modeling basics. Tom, Duane, Chuck and Loren graciously



Steve Jacobs looks on as Phil Sharpnack runs through how to tune a locomotive decoder using DecoderPro.



Tom Pearson, CenTex Division alum, returned to give a lesson on advanced DecoderPro features.



Terry Nathan and Howard Young receiving certificates for best displays of their T-Track modules.



Loren Neufeld (left) and Chuck Lind (right) drove in from points east to present their scenery clinic.

drove from out of town to share their expertise with us.

In addition to the clinics, we had a room dedicated to learning throughout the day. The main attraction was the inspiring AustiNtrak T-Track module setup. I didn't count the modules, but there were a lot of finely modeled and highly detailed modules generously hosted by Terry Nathan and Howard Young. Nothing beats having some running trains to set the right mood.

We also had a contest corner run by Jack and Carol Merkel, which is the first time in a long time CenTex has had a contest event. We are looking to build momentum so more people can share and be recognized for their modeling efforts as well as encourage participation in the Achievement Program.

We also had a couple of other firsts for a division gathering. Phil Sharpnack, Harry Petheram, and Bill Dryden manned stations to help tune locomotive decoders and rolling stock. Participants brought their equipment and Phil and Bill tweaked and offered advice for smooth running equipment. I thought this was a tremendous service and great way to teach people valuable skills using their own equipment.

On Saturday and Sunday we had several layouts open to tour, and we bookended the meet with operating sessions on Friday and Sunday. There were also many door prizes presented at the end of the meet generously The Marker Lamp

donated by our sponsors, and it was a great way to end a day talking trains.

The day was filled with opportunities to casually chat with others in the division and there were many people from outside of the division, too. We even had a visitor from way out of town - Norway out of town.

Einar Jensen was in from Norway for a super computing conference, and he just happened to see that our event was taking place. Jerry Wilson and Frolin Marek took him around to several layouts, and he seemed to have a good time. We even managed to sign him up with an NMRA Rail Pass membership!

Check out the CenTex [web page](#) for the meet wrap up and to see a list of sponsors, photos and more about the weekend.

So, phase one of our plan was a success, and we are hard at work on phase two and beyond. I'm excited about where we are headed as a division, and I am looking forward to having more opportunities to hang out with these good people.

The CenTex Division has turned into a pretty darn good place to be a model railroader, and I'm proud of the people here who are making it better every day!

Riley



Up The Tracks

By Bill Dryden NMRA & LSR Life Member

Here are upcoming events within the LSR of which I am aware. I will provide all the information YOU send me or I can glean from other publications, websites, etc., for these events. Additional information may be available through the NMRA Scale Rails and/or various trade magazines or various websites. Also, note that all show times and dates are at the discretion of the sponsoring organization and are subject to change. Please forward any and all information about upcoming events or activities in your area, club, etc., to me via e-mail at bdr149@airmail.net.

Lone Star Region 65th Annual Convention (2016)

The Daylight Express will be held in Arlington, June 22-25, 2016, at the Sheraton Arlington Hotel.

<http://www.mainlinerrails.com>

Check the LSR website: <http://www.lonestarregion.com/convention.shtml>

Come all!!!
PARTICIPATE!!!

RECURRING EVENTS AND MEETINGS

LSR Division 3 - Northeast Texas Division – Allen

The Trinity River Division meets on the Second Saturday of every month at Christ the Servant Lutheran Church, Allen.

Occasionally the day or branch changes due to scheduling conflicts so pay close attention to the e-mail meeting notices that go out a week before the meeting. If you would like to be added to the e-mail list contact Jerry Hoverson at JKHoverson@gmail.com.

LSR Division 4 – Cen-Tex Division – Austin

The Cen-Tex Division meets quarterly at the main branch of the Round Rock Library in downtown Round Rock. Meetings include clinics, show-and-tell, DCC minute, social activities and a layout open house. For more information about upcoming meetings, see <http://centexnmra.org> or contact director@centexnmra.org to be added to our email list.

Alamo Model Railroad Engineers - San Antonio

The Alamo Model Railroad Engineers meets the 2nd Friday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Zucht Building at the Texas Transportation Museum, 11791 Wetmore Rd., San Antonio TX. For more information call Peter Shavney (210) 317-3661 or Gene Turner (210) 355-2777; or visit the web site www.alamomodelrailroadengineers.com.

Houston Area Live Steamers

HALS has over 9,000 feet of track for you to enjoy and ride on most any Saturday of the year. Someone is usually there every Saturday with special run, operations, waybills/timetable, work and fun run days scheduled throughout the year. Our public run days are the third Saturday of the month March through November. Come see our 2,500 foot expansion in Phase 4. Model Railroaders (any scale) are welcome to attend most any time. Check our web site out at www.hals.org for schedule of events or e-mail Rick White – rick.white.jr@gmail.com for more information.

North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs – Irving

The North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs (NTC) meets the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Visit the website www.dfwtrainshows.com for more information about the NTC, its meeting site or member clubs.

New Braunfels Railroad Museum

Kids Fun Day is held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of each month, 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. New Braunfels Railroad Museum, 302 South San Antonio Street, in the 1907 Restored Railroad Depot; New Braunfels, TX. Museum phone (830) 627-2447. Kids of all ages will have the opportunity to run model trains and become a Jr. Engineer. Also among the displays at the Kids Fun Day will be a large US Army Model Garden (G) Scale and Lego Trains. Visit our Steam

Engine, Caboose, Dining Car (available for Birthday Parties) and Box Car. There will be other fun, train related activities, additional model trains, train artifacts, our 1907 depot are on display. The Railroad Museum opens at 10:00 am on Saturdays. For field trip scheduling and more information, call Howard Young (210) 542-6121, or visit us at www.nbrm.org.

Texas Western Model Railroad Club – Forest Hills

The Texas Western Model Railroad Club meets for its business meeting every 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 PM. The Club is located at 6808 Forest Hills Drive, Forest Hills, TX. For more information: (682) 587-2092 or www.twmrc.org or email cao@twmrc.org.

EVENTS AND SHOWS

November

13th – 15th East Texas & Gulf Rail Modelers Association

Fri. 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Admission Free. Hebert Public Library, 2025 Merriman Street, Port Naches, TX. For more information Les McMahan at lmcmahan@gt.rr.com or (409) 334-1361

14th Cowtown Model Railroad Club Holiday Train Show

Sat. 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Admission \$7, Kids under 10 Free. Game On Arena Sports Center, 251 Settlement Drive, Fort Worth, TX. For more information www.cmrrc.webs.com

21st Texas Train Show

Admission is \$5 at the Door / Kids enter FREE! Christopher Hall, 1602 Thousand Oaks Drive, San Antonio, TX. For more information <http://www.texasrainshow.net>

27th – 29th; Dec. 4th – 6th; 11th – 13th 5th Annual Holiday Toy Trains at the Depot

(Sponsored by: Center for Regional Heritage Research Department of Stephen F. Austin University, Production Video from the Center for Regional Heritage Research About the Depot, City of Nacogdoches, Nacogdoches Chamber of Commerce). Each Scheduled day – 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Admission Free. Nacogdoches Southern Pacific Train Depot, Corner of West Main Street & Old Tyler Road, 2 Blocks West of Business US-59 on West Main Street, Nacogdoches, TX. Special Exhibit: Operation Lifesaver RR representatives will be on site opening weekend.

December

Beginning 1st Gregg County Historical Museum Holiday Trains

Check with Museum for hours and days of operation. Adults \$TBA, Seniors 60 & Up \$TBA, School Aged Children \$TBA, Museum Members – Free. Gregg County Historical Museum, 214 North Fredonia Street, Longview, TX. For more information, call the museum for more information and extended dates & hours (903) 753-5840, or <http://www.gregghistorical.org>

4th 2015 Kansas City Southern Railroad Holiday Express Tour

will be in Shreveport LA. Starting November 27, the KCS Holiday Express Tour begins in DeRidder, LA. The Holiday Express will be traveling through 7 states and 20 communities where visitors can tour the train. Santa and his Elves will be on board this special train. Each event is free and open to the public.

For more information <http://www.kcsouthern.com/en-us/media/news-releases?release=41>

January 2016

16th – 17th Dallas Area Train Show

(Sponsored by the North Texas Council of Railroad Clubs) Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free with Paid Adult Admission, Scouts & Scout Leaders in Uniform, Admission is Free. Plano Centre; 2000 East Spring Creek Parkway; Plano, TX. For more information, visit <http://www.dfwtrainshows.com>.

30th – 31st SAMRA 40th Annual Jamboree & Train Show

Sat. 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 4:00 p.m. Adult - \$7, Under 16 Free (Limit 3) with paid adult admission Carmack Event Center, 1948 Austin Highway, San Antonio, TX. For more information: <http://samratx.org/>.

February

20th Greater Houston Train Show

Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Adults \$6, Ages 12-18 \$1, Kids Under 12: Free. Stafford Centre, 10505 Cash Road @ Murphy Road, Stafford, TX. For more information: Steve Sandifer (281) 568-9918 or <http://sanjacmodeltrains.org/styled-2/index.html>

20th – 21st 2015 World's Greatest Hobby on Tour

Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m. Adults \$?? Kids Under 16: Free (must be accompanied by a parent. No limit to the number of kids per adult).. Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center; 200 E. Market Street; San Antonio, TX. For more information <http://www.wghshow.com>

March

19th River City Toy & Train Club Train Show

Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12: Free. Longview Fairgrounds Exhibit Hall, 1123 Jaycee Drive, Longview, TX. For more information: Randy Guy (318) 402-8896, or e-mail erandguy7@gmail.com

April

9th – 10th New Braunfels Spring Jamboree & Train Show

Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$7, Ages 5-17 \$2, Kids Under 5: Free. New Braunfels Civic Center, 375 South Castell Avenue, New Braunfels, TX (Exit 187 on I-35). For more information: Jim Edmondson @ 830-629-2071 or e-mail jedmondson@satx.rr.com, or www.nbrm.org

May

16th – 17th Jefferson's 4th Annual Train Days Celebration

(Sponsored by the Jefferson Historical Society & Museum). Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Sun. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults Boarding Pass \$18.50 = 4 Destinations for One Price, Kids Boarding Pass 6 to 12 \$15.00 = 4 Destinations for One Price {R. D. Moses T&P Model Train Exhibit, Rail Baron Jay Gould's Business Car "ATALANTA" Tour, Historic Jefferson Railway Narrow Gauge Train Ride, Train Show at Jefferson Transportation Center}. For more information: Norman Buell (903) 665-7682, or <http://www.jeffersontraindays.com>, <http://www.visitjeffersonontexas.com>, <http://www.jeffersonrailway.com>

21st Shreveport 2nd Annual Train Show

Sat. 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Adults \$8, Kids Under 12 Free. RiverView Hall, 600 Clyde Fant Parkway, Shreveport, LA. For more information, Randy Guy (318) 402-8896 or e-mail erandguy7@gmail.com

Excursion Train Trips

Austin Steam Train; Cedar Park, TX; (512) 477-8468; www.austinsteamtrain.org

Grapevine Vintage Railroad; Grapevine, TX; (817) 410-3185; www.gvrr.com

Old Hickory Railroad; Jackson, LA; (225) 634-7397; www.louisianasteamtrain.com

Texas State Railroad; Palestine & Rusk, TX; (888) 987-2461; www.texasstaterr.com

Please consider our deadlines for submittals and publications to allow adequate lead time to correctly announce your event – Column submission deadlines are the 15th of January, April, July and October; publication of the Marker Lamp is the middle of the following month.



Procrastination

By Duane Richardson, MMR
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com



Photo 1

While I would like to report that there has been progress on my own layout that just hasn't happened. A couple of things have prevented it: 2 young kids, a job, a couple of side businesses, you know... life. Like many of you, to fill in the need to model, I have joined a club and we have spent the last several years working on a Sn3 modular layout.

We are down to the point of the final details and talk has already begun as to what to do next. Working with these guys has not only been a great chance to stretch my modeling muscles but it's been one of the most rewarding things I have ever done in the hobby. We are all very like-minded and we easily work together for a common goal.

Besides that they are a great group of guys and beyond the modeling their friendship has been blessing

as well. While I was the Contest Room Chairman I wasn't able to build models for the contest so the club proved to be a good outlet for my creative side.

Now that I can get back into the Contest I've been giving some thought once again to what to build and how I will use it later. In the meantime I have a few things I'm building for friends that will keep me busy at the bench for a while yet. One of these projects, the Start Mine, I brought to the convention this year and is now being installed on one of my club member's layout. (Picture 1)

In any geographic area the model railroaders tend to form small communities. More so among narrow gauge modelers. It was through this that I met a friend of mine, Jack Walton, who has a nice size Sn3 layout. During a visit one day I found myself going home with a kit for

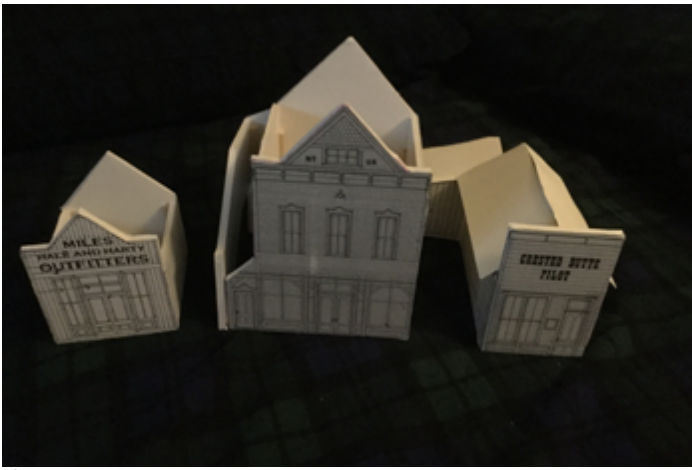


Photo 2

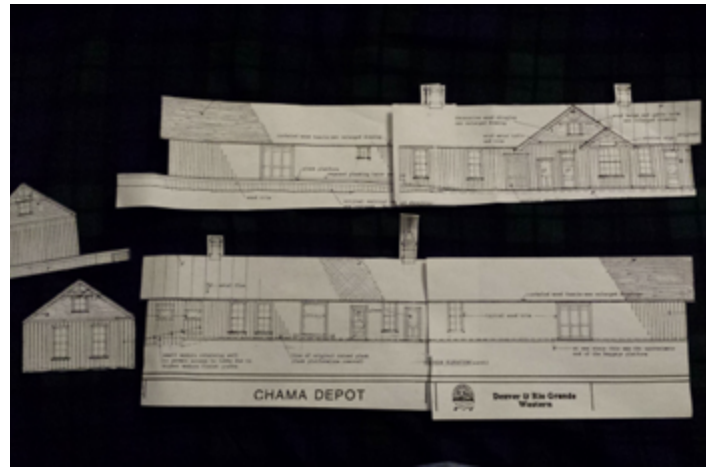


Photo 3

a mine to build for him. This has been sitting on my shelf for a bit now but I have unpacked the parts and instructions and started looking everything over.

As I have already brought up in this column before, I'm not a fan of building anything so it looks just like it does on the box. Fortunately, Jack agreed with that so now I'm in mad scientist mode. Planning all the ways it could be done differently. It's this planning process I wanted to talk with you about this time.

Over the years I have done what all model railroaders have done. I have built the layout up to a point where you have track down and want to move some trains around. There are no buildings or only a handful on the layout as place holders but you still want to push a few cars around. I've spotted cars next to cut outs of the buildings foot print, folded over index cards with the company name or a cigar box with the name taped to it. Each step along the way the building got a little more complex and now I am working with something that is so much better.

I was planning my project for Prototype Modeler and wondered about how I was going to compress the scene into the space I was working in. What to leave out or move became a big question. To answer this I started making full size, 3-D mock-ups of the buildings.

This gives you not only the amount of space the building will occupy but it also gives you the height of the buildings as well. It allows you see a full 3-D view of the town. This is very important when you are selecting structures and planning the scenery as well. While this is really helpful with the industries this really comes into play with all of those buildings that are the 'town' that we don't spot a car to. Having the ability to arrange and select which buildings you want where has been one of the biggest benefits of these kind of mock-ups.

In my club's construction of the Elk Canyon & Western layout I built about a dozen mock-ups that we set up on the layout and pushed around until we found the combination that we liked. We left the mock-ups in

place while I started construction and remained until we had the buildings underway enough to start putting them on the layout.

For the first few years we displayed the layout in various stages of construction so it made sense to see the buildings themselves in mid-build as well. (Picture 2)

To make the mock-up is really simple. If the kit gives you the 4 elevation drawings of the structure you can simply copy these to make the mock-up. If it's just a plastic wall type kit chances are you won't have the drawings so you can just lay the walls on the copier.

Once I have the paper copy I trace these off onto foam-core board. Remember, just like building the kit, you will either have to miter the corners or set up your corners so the peaked wall is on the outside. I don't bother trying to miter the corners of the foam-core. It's too much hassle to be honest and the other option is so much easier.

When you make the side walls measure the thickness of the foam-core itself. Remove that amount from either end of the side wall. The copied wall will overlap now so when you glue the side wall to the end the overlap will cover the foam-core edge on the end wall and leave you with what looks like a mitered corner. I use a glue stick to mount the copied walls to the foam-core. I use Aleene's Tacky Glue to glue the walls together and I glue a strip of balsa (about the only good use for it besides carving tree trunks) into the corners for support.

If you are working on drawings you can even color them with markers or pencils (or Crayon's if you want) to give your mock-up some color. I use some poster board to put a roof on the building and you are done. It's really just that simple. (Picture 3 & 4).

Do you have to go to all this work? No, but it really is worth it and it really isn't that much work. You would be amazed how fast you can build them. This also comes in handy if you are selectively compressing a building. You can make a few versions of the building in various sizes. You may find that while it fits the space on the layout

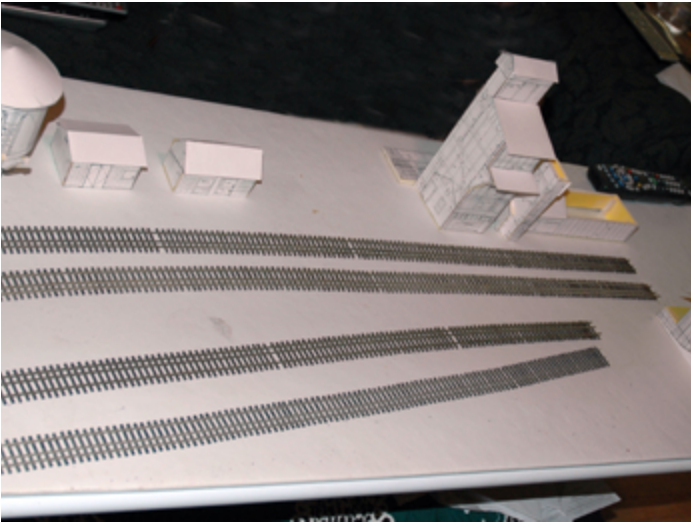


Photo 4

the structure loses what you liked about it.

Sometimes the proportions don't work out when you shrink a building down in size or enlarge it some. Some walls may need to be made taller or shorter and this will point that out. In the case of the Start Mine we found that both structures were too far apart to fit where we needed it to go so I was able to make corrections in the model. (Picture 5)

If you have something that you would like for me to cover please feel free to contact me and I'll see what I can do about digging up some information. duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Until next time, keep the boiler full, the fires hot and your wheels on the rails. **ML**

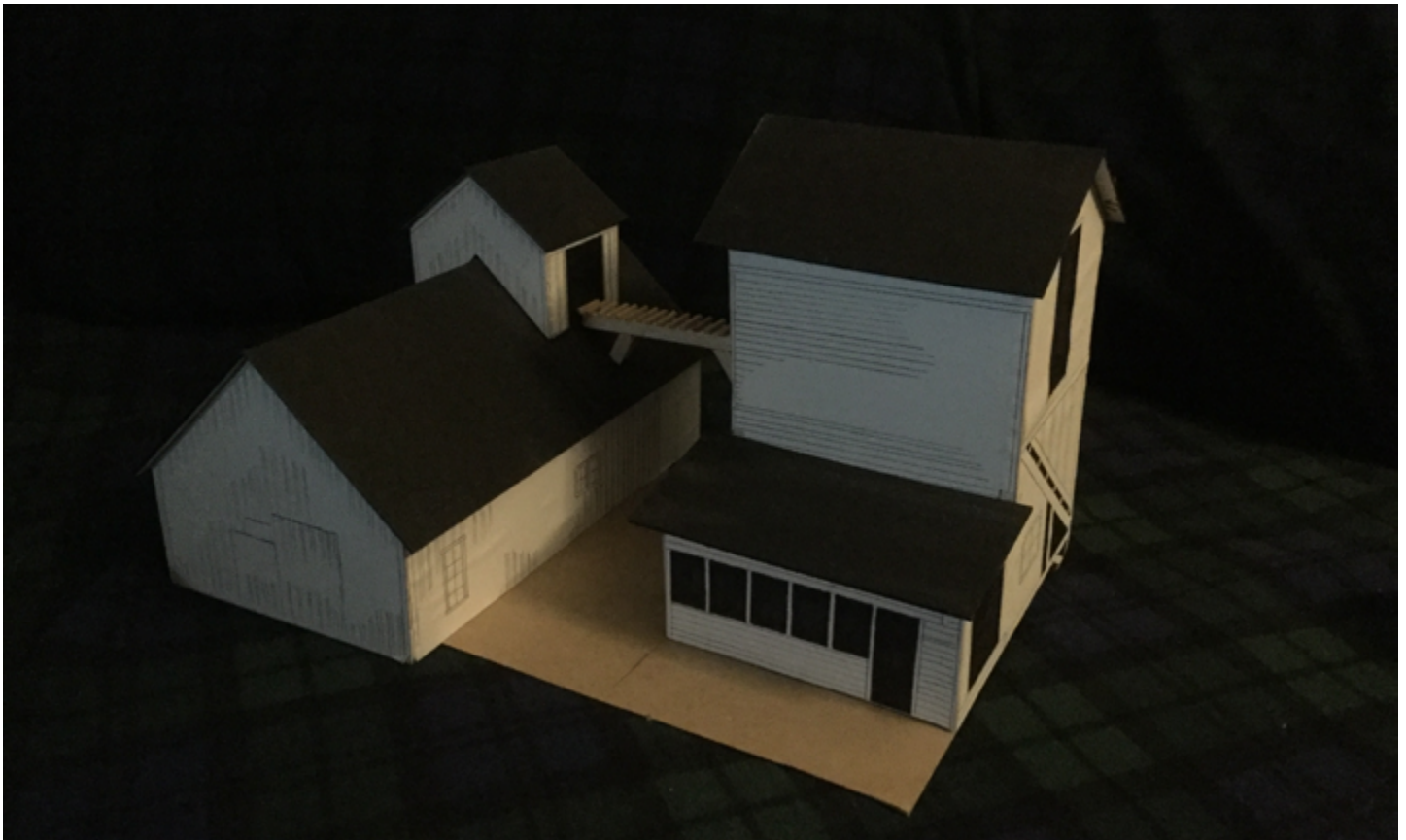


Photo 5



Programming Basics

by Blake Bogs

superchief1520@gmail.com

(713) 254-7447

Well it's time for another article and today I'm continuing with the topic of decoders covering CV's. I have been around trains with DCC for many years and programming CV's has always been uncharted water for me. I use decoder pro but I have had some decoders that won't take the programming for decoder pro for some reason or another. So it's always important to know which CV's are which. In this article today I will cover some basic CV's to know and basic info about decoders.

First off what is a CV? Many people getting into trains come in and don't know what DCC is and they sure don't know what a CV is. CV is basically a programming code that tells the decoder how to function. This code is saved and then allows the decoder to function in the way it's programmed to. For instance, if you want Mars Light, you program the CV and it will allow that light to have the Mars capability.

Now that you know what a CV is, let's talk about basic CV's that need to be in your memory. The first CV that you need to know is CV 8 and program this to a value of 8. On most decoders this will totally reset the decoder. The nice thing about decoders is they can be reset at any time. Say I put CV 3 at 120, CV for a value of 28, and CV 89 for a value of 4. So when I do this my locomotive runs great until I get up to speed step 24 and suddenly it runs very funky. I can do one of three things. My first option is run away and go ask my father to fix it while I go on eBay and buy more trains (my favorite option), reprogram each CV I changed to its original settings individually and see which one caused my issue, or finally program CV8 for a value of 8. If I haven't programmed anything else, I would reset my decoder. This is a simple and easy way to solve my problem. Please note, some companies have a special CV to reset their decoders. If this is the case simply call the manufacturer and ask them what their CV is to reprogram the decoder.

The second CV value I will cover is CV3 and CV4. CV3 covers the acceleration of an engine while CV4 covers

deceleration. Many people like to allow the engine to run as if it does in real life. This means they add acceleration. These two CV's have the ability to be programmed between 0-255. I always set mine for 0. The reason is I like to have control of my engines. Yes it will be more prototypical to have an engine that accelerations and decelerates slowly but what if you forgot to throw the switch and the engines are about to collide. The engines will run into each other if they keep running and do not decelerate immediately.

CV 29 is one of the most critical CV's to program. The engine's function relies on CV29 to operate. It tells it whether to operate on DC/DCC or DCC only, to have a 2 digit or 4 digit engine number, to operate at a 14 speed step or to operate at a 28/128 speed step, and finally enable or disable a speed table.

CV's 33-46 are essential for ditch lights and dual functions. When I have a decoder with ditch lights I want my engine to turn on both lights at both times. To do this, I have to program the CV's to do this. Usually I program CV 39 and 40 to allow this to happen. Also if I ever want to move my function's around, I can do that with CV 33-46.

CV's 67-95 are used to program Speed Steps. These values range from 0-255. I always start out slow and gradually increase. Maybe increase by 8 or 9 if you are wanting a fast running locomotive, but if you are running a switcher locomotive, consider stopping at a value of 128 instead. This allows the engine to creep through the freight yard.

CV's 49-56 control the functions of the lights. With these CV's you can program your lights to do special effects such as Mars Light, firebox flicker, and ditch lights. The TCS manual below lists all of the CV's to allow this to happen in addition to giving you the CV necessary to slow and speed up your ditch light and to increase and decrease the brightness of your lights.

Now that you have basic understanding of CV's and may want to learn more about DCC and CV's, I recommend looking at this following links and several books.

The books I recommend are the *DCC Guide*, *DCC Projects and Applications*, and finally *DCC Projects and Applications 2*.

If you only care about CV's, read the links below. TCS does a great job on their DCC guide, while Soundtraxx's guide is more confusing. I recommend reading the instruction that come with your DCC Decoder before installing the decoder or read the DCC manual that came with your DCC/Sound engine. Please not that all decoders have different CV's. Some are universal, others are not.

This guide is a guide to TCS decoders and provides the information in a way that you don't have to be a rocket scientist to understand.

https://www.tcsdcc.com/Customer_Content/Technical_Info/Tech_Manuals/Comprehensive%20Programming%20Guide.pdf

Another guide is:

http://www.soundtraxx.com/manuals/Tsunami%20Diesel%20Technical%20Reference_1.13.pdf

This guide is hard for me to understand but I will include it anyway.

<http://www.nmra.org.au/gndu/EasyDCC/Decoders.pdf>

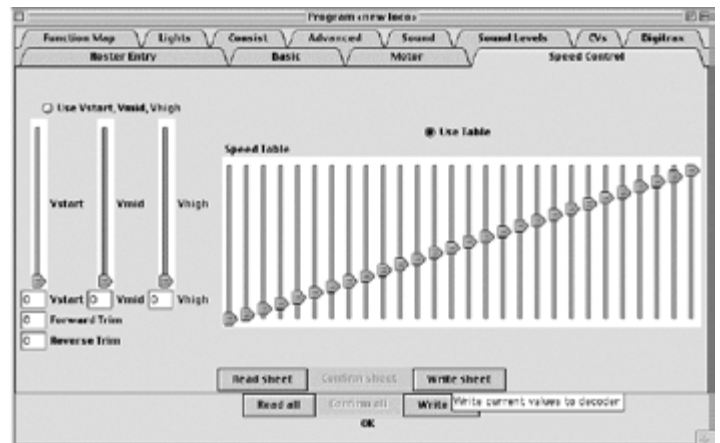
This is a guide about Decoder Pro and gives basic information for CV's.

<http://jmri.org/help/en/html/apps/DecoderPro/index.shtml>

If you are using a Digitrax decoder you can use their website to calculate the CV value for a particular function.

<http://www.digitrax.com/support/cv/>

As I have noted in the past, I recommend that if you are programming CVs, get the programming unit off their website or eBay and then download Decoder Pro/JMRI. This program is literally a life saver. Decoder Pro operates under the program Java. It allows the user to easily program CV's and allows Decoder Pro to do all the work instead of the user confusing themselves why a certain function does not work on their program. **ML**



Daylight Express 2016

Arlington, TX

June 22-25, 2016

Put it on your calendars, the Daylight Express is already at full throttle and is promising to be a blow-out event of **Super** Regional proportions. Watch this space for info on all of the clinics, tours, layouts and more. *ML*



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LSR NMRA

Then send to:
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Rockwall, TX 75087

Ads can then be sent as a JPG file attached to an email to:
rileytriggs@gmail.com

H.O.O.T.E.R.S. 2015

Text and photos by Don Winn



Layout hosts left to right, Gilbert Freitag, Gordon Bliss, and Gil Freitag

Every three years, the premier layout owners in Houston host a grand operations weekend known as H.O.O.T.E.R.S. (the Houston Operators Of Tiny Electrical Railroad Systems). The event draws modelers from all across Texas, Oklahoma and Louisiana, and even an N-scale modeler from Germany this year!

The 2015 H.O.O.T.E.R.S. event was held November 6th through the 8th. Fourteen owners opened their homes and clubs to the visitors, with some hosting multiple sessions. 29 operators participated, not counting the hosts and their crews and helpers. Participants could sign up for 4 sessions: Friday night, Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning.

Four of the layout operations are reported below. The other fine layouts hosted included Robert Ashcraft's Raton Western, Eddie Aycock's Union Pacific – Town Creek Sub, Tom Bailey's Great Plains District of the Santa Fe, Bob Barnett's River City Union Terminal, Craig Brantley's Denver and Rio Grande Western – Spring Div, Al Partlow's Texas & New Orleans, Steve Standifer's Santa Fe – Howard District, Dave Shafer's Culpepper Ridge, Randall Wilson's Southern Pacific's Rabbit and Bill Wright's Green Bay Southern.

Gil and Virginia Freitag graciously treated us all to a BBQ dinner and an evening of socializing over at their

home on Saturday. The evening was capped off with a special open house tour of Eddie Carroll's Glenbrook Valley Railroad.

A big thank you goes to Tom Bailey who put the whole show together. He organized the event, putting together a high caliber slate of layouts. It was very well organized, with spreadsheets of where everyone was going, and directions to the layouts. He made it look easy; although I'm sure it took quite a bit of work to get it right.

By all accounts, the meet was very successful and enjoyable.



Yardmaster Dirk Warwel (left - from Germany) helps Ray Brunner get his train out of Winslow at All the Way



Argentine Yardmaster David Spencer at All The Way



Craig Stoops commands a unit oil train at All The Way

Santa Fe – All The Way

Host: Gordon Bliss

Gordon Bliss models the Santa Fe transcontinental in N scale from Chicago to LA, which allows a wide range of scenery opportunities from the plains to the mountains to the deserts. The famous Route 66 parallels much of the line, allowing Gordon to model the iconic roadside motels and attractions that were popular in 1953. The layout is double-decked; resulting in a 464' mainline to stretch the legs of his long consists. Santa Fe – All The Way has been featured in a number of magazines, The Marker Lamp

including the *Cowcatcher*, *N Scale Railroading*, *Railroad Model Craftsman* and *Digitrax Advertising*.

The layout is designed with operations in mind. Gordon hosted 2 sessions over the weekend, with 3 yardmasters and 5 road engineers for each session, in addition to some of Gordon's regular crew to dispatch and to help keep things moving.

I volunteered for the Kansas City Union Station yardmaster job. I had not operated a passenger yard before and not many layouts offer this opportunity, so I jumped at it. Besides the station tracks and coach yard,



Dispatcher Randall Wilson works prototype CTC machine



Feedback during the debrief meeting at APN



Frolin Marek had the Conroe Yard under control at APN

the grounds also include tracks to spot cars at the Post Office, the Fred Harvey commissary and the REA freight house. As a first time operator on the layout, I appreciated that Gordon has done a great job of identifying the track numbers, both on the layout and in the switch lists.

During the evening, passenger trains came in with head end cars that needed to be switched out. Others came in and terminated, while I built up other trains originating from Kansas City. The 3 hours flew by. Good times. Thanks, Gordon.

See a video of Santa Fe – All The Way at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qbf1-Z-wAvo> or search for "Kingman Canyon 1953" on YouTube.

All Points North

Host: Terry Burkhardt (head of APN Operating Committee) and the APN club



All Points North is a large, freelanced club layout. The present layout is 30' x 50' plus staging, but construction and benchwork have been completed to more than double the size of the building and the layout. The layout supported 10 guest operators, plus club members on each of the 2 sessions they hosted on Saturday.

Some of the design features I found interesting include a section of loopback track that comes out into the lounge area, complete with thunderstorm with sound



Jim Willis holding his train for a meet at APN



Shadowbox of Neath on APN



Jim Archer, one of the APN club members helping out

and lighting effects. I also like the station stop called "Neath" which exposes otherwise hidden track with a nice little town. I'm thinking I have a few places on my next layout that could use a scene like that.

I drew Train 360, the Paper Trail Turn. As the name implies, the main job was to deliver cars to a large paper mill. The industry was well designed to support operations, with multiple spots for pulpwood, chips, chemicals, finished goods and ample storage tracks.

At the end of the session, Terry called the participants together for a debrief discussion, soliciting input from the guests on how to improve the operations for future runs. I found that activity to be valuable, as I think we can all take away new ideas at an ops session.



The next generation of operators having a good time at APN

Stony Creek & Western

Hosts: Gil, Virginia and Gilbert Freitag



Gil Freitag's Stony Creek & Western layout has been featured in many of the hobby magazines over the decades. As a first time visitor/operator to the Stony Creek & Western, it was really a special treat. In many ways it was a step back in time to another era, relative to current thinking of layout design and the modern technology of locomotive control systems. None of us can go back and operate on John Allen's or John Armstrong's layouts, but one of the classics is still up and



*Robinson Yardmaster
Peter Bryant calling the dispatcher.*



Talking trains after the BBQ dinner hosted by the Freitags.



Dave Salamon (left) and Ray Brunner exchanging cars on the Stony Creek and Western

running in Houston after almost 50 years. And of course, the layout is full of Gil's award winning structures which feature incredible detail (he is MMR #91). I can now check it off my bucket list of significant layout visits.

It's a good thing I was able to click off a few photos before I got my train assignment, because after that I stayed pretty busy doing my switching and getting out of the way on the mainline. I had train #50, a sweeper that originated in Johnson Yard and traveled the length of the layout. I quickly found that I was not very good at predicting where my train would emerge once it entered into a hidden track section. Normally, that can be unsettling, but I decided that was going to be part of the fun. To appreciate the amount of track in this layout, you can download the track plan from the Model Railroader track plan database: <http://mrr.trains.com/how-to/track-plan-database/2007/08/stony-creek-and-western>.

By the time I got my train back to Johnson Yard, I was thinking that it all ended far too soon.

Cashaway Valley Railroad

Host: Jim Thompson

First impressions are often not an accurate reading of a model railroad. My first impression upon entering the Cashaway Valley was "hmmm -- kind of small". My impression leaving the railroad was, "fun and friendly -- let's do it again." Jim Thompson was our fun and friendly host to his HO scale Cashaway Valley Railroad. It was originally a completely freelanced coal-hauling railroad set in West Virginia, but now connects to the Norfolk & Western.

The operating plan calls for a yardmaster at the port of Cashaway, and 2 road engineers who typically run 5 - 6 trains each. Jim serves as the dispatcher/road master/trouble shooter/host. On this particular day he had agreed to take on an apprentice dispatcher (me) to



Ray Brunner switches in a sleeper while Cashaway Valley owner Jim Thompson looks on.



Dispatcher's CTC desk at Cashaway Valley



Chuck Latvala couldn't be happier at Cashaway Valley.

observe and learn how he operates his CTC system. My goal being how to use Jim's experience as I design CTC into my next railroad.

Jim used the JMRI PanelPro (free) software to create the CTC interface. He took it another step by running it concurrently on a tablet that he can carry around the layout while he works with his guests. When a friend's health was in decline to the point where he could no longer come to Jim's operating sessions, Jim set him up to where his friend could control the railroad remotely from 42 miles away. Hey – that's basically how they do it in 1:1 scale railroads!

The track work (hand-laid), locos and rolling stock all performed without a flaw, which is a big plus in any ops session. Jim has put a lot of detail into structures, with lighting and interesting interior scenes. Part way through the session, Jim's wife, Cindy, came out to bring

us warm, homemade kolaches to go with the fresh coffee. Did I already say they were fun and friendly?

Jim keeps statistics on his operations, and posts them on the door to the layout room. By his tally, we were the 169th operation session since he started keeping records in 2006. That equates to 34,693 cars switched, and counting. Wow! Now, that's a lot of operating for a layout of any size!

See more of the Cashaway Valley at Jim's website at <http://www.cashawayvalleyrr.com/>

Next Year

HOOTERS is a tri-annual event, with ops sessions in alternating years in Dallas/Ft. Worth and Tulsa. The next event will be the "DFW Interchange", planned for the fall of 2016. If railroad operations are something you enjoy, please contact Chris Atkins at chris@railroadmodelers.com to inquire about next year's DFW Interchange.



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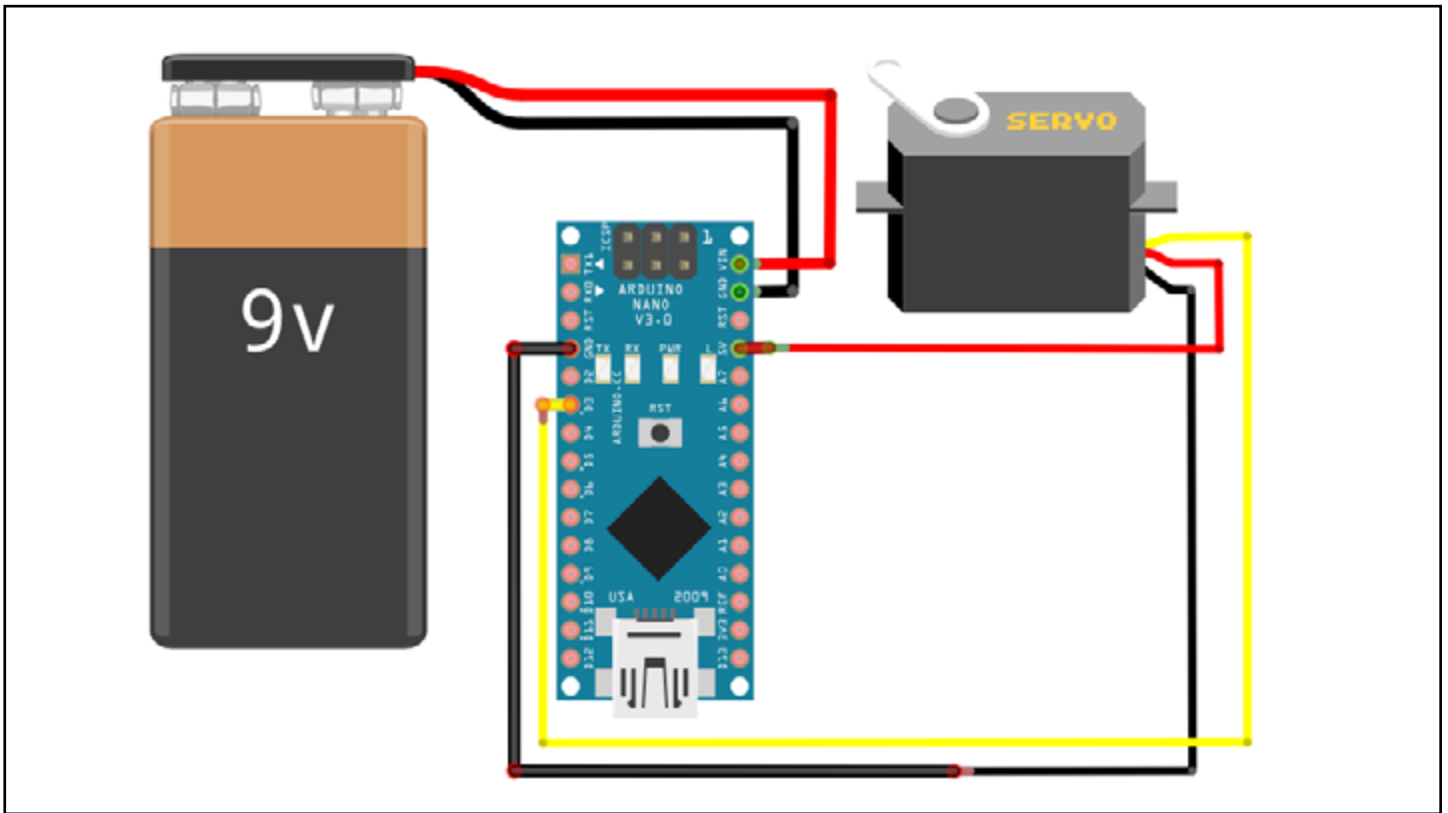
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...RRRduino...

by Speed

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Servo control pin connected to D3 (<http://fritzing.org/used>)

An Arduino Controlling a Servo

Making a servo move used to be an expensive endeavor, but now, with an Arduino containing at least 6 PWM (Pulse Width Modulation) pins, you can easily control 6 of them for less than \$10!

To control a servo, you need to send it a digital pulse every 20 milliseconds (which turns out to be 50 Hz ($1 / 20 \text{ ms}$)) and the width of the pulse determines how far the servo arm will move. As shown at https://www.servocity.com/html/how_do_servos_work_.html, a 1 ms wide pulse will move the servo to the one end and a 2 ms wide pulse will move it to the other end. While, a 1.5 ms width pulse, would center the servo in its range.

Now you might understand why a simple DPDT (Double Pole Double Throw) toggle switch can not control a servo like we can control a Tortoise machine. Toggle switches simply do not generate pulses of different widths! (And I know someone will challenge me on this one,

and I will gladly post the video of anyone toggling a switch at 50 Hz “moving a servo precisely” on YouTube!) Servos themselves are also getting less and less expensive, \$2.34 for this TG9e Micro Servo at Hobby King (<http://tinyurl.com/p9accx5>).

One more thing before we ‘Arduino’ the servo, you need to know that a servo can use quite a bit of current to obtain and maintain its position, if something is pushing against it, so, to avoid resetting the Arduino board, it is advised that you provide a separate power source to power the servo. They typically need something between 4.8V and 6V, so a 5Vdc wall wart would do just fine. The USB 2.0 port can only provide 500 mA at most, and when your servo starts buzzing, you are exceeding this current limit. In our Division 3 clinic, we plugged a 9V battery into the Nano’s Vin and GND pins. (See image previous page)

Software:

The folks at Arduino.cc gave us a library to control a servo with, by simply including the Servo.h file. So quickly read though the next few lines of code and I’ll explain it after wards:

```
#include <Servo.h>                // include the Servo
library

// define the PWM pin used to connect the servo to
// on the Uno and Nano, you can use 3,5,6,9,10 or 11
#define servolPIN 3

Servo myServo1;                   // create the servo
object

void setup() {
    myServo1.attach( servolPIN ); // attach the pin to
the servo object
} // setup

void loop() {
    myServo1.write( 90 );          // set the servo posi-
tion to 90
    delay( 1000 );                 // wait one second
    myServo1.write( 120 );         // set the servo posi-
tion to 120
    delay( 1000 );                 // wait one second
} // loop
```

If the comments are not clear enough, we first include the Servo library, then define servo1PIN to pin 3. Create the myServo1 object and in the setup() function attach it to the servo1PIN. And then over and over in the loop() function, write 90 and 120 to it, while delaying a second after each.

You plug your specific Arduino board into the computer's USB port, start the Arduino software, paste the code shown above into it, and from the Tools menu, pick your specific board (Uno or Nano) and then select the COM port.

Now select the "Upload" button (which will verify or compile the code). Give it a few seconds and start watching the servo motor move from 90 to 120 degrees. Only your imagination can guide you to the next step! Read an analog or digital pin to decide when you move the servo? Or how far? Adding a second servo with servo2PIN, myServo2.attach() and myServo2.write()?

Now you have successfully moved your first servo with an Arduino! You also did not have to worry one little bit (pun intended) about the width of the pulse in milliseconds, isn't that nice? Next time we will flash some lights while moving the servo...

The code above and another version to move the servo slower between the 2 points are online at the bottom of <http://www.TxNamib.com/EnS/rrrduino/ML2015-4>

ML

NMRA Layout Directory

Work is underway on a new program to create a member Layout Directory. This will replace the visitation feature of the old NMRA Pike Registry Program.

The Layout Directory will be an on-line system that allows NMRA members (only) to:

- Identify the layouts of participating NMRA members by location, scale, gauge, era, prototype and area modeled, etc.
- Review the particular features of the layouts
- Contact layout owners to arrange visits or exchange common-interest information

Layout owner participation will be voluntary and built-in security features will protect privacy.

A working group has been formed to develop the Directory and input is needed from NMRA members.

One of the first tasks of the group is to survey layout owners from the old Pike Registry and visitors to their layouts to determine:

- What visitation aspects worked
- What didn't work
- What features they liked
- What features they didn't like
- Suggestions for the new Layout Directory

The working group also will survey other NMRA members who either own layouts or are interested in visiting layouts to determine what they expect from a directory, what concerns they may have and suggestions in general.

NMRA members are invited to comment by contacting the working group chairman, Bob Chaparro, at chiefbobb@verizon.net or 951-925-2069.

Members interested in having their layouts included in the Layout Directory also should contact Bob. *ML*

'Round Town with Roy

Text and images by Roy Stockard



A green boiler Blackstone C-19 2-8-0 pulls into the Silida yard on Jerry Hoverson's HOn3 Colorado Pacific Railroad. The tender of this green boiler engine is numbered 347 which happen to be Jerry's MMR number. The layout is currently being rebuilt in his new home in Melissa, Texas.

The photo and digital sky are by Roy Stockard. HOn3 modeling by Jerry Hoverson.



Sunrise casts warm orange and yellow tones as a K-28, #473 heads into the morning approaching the Cripple Creek Bridge on Marc LaChey's Sn3 Cripple Creek and Tin Cup Railroad.

Mark did the modeling and Gary Rush painted the background on this digitally enhanced photo by Roy Stockard.

Achievement Program



Achievement Program

by Duane Richardson, MMR

In talking with National I have confirmed that he processes our submissions on the 28th of each month. If you can get your paperwork to me before then I can get it processed and sent. I was also informed that a PDF scan of the paperwork is acceptable. This is how I have been working with it and it's worked great. This allows me to take submissions almost up to the deadline and still get the paperwork in on time.

If your paperwork is submitted to National prior to the 28th it will get processed on that month's list and you will have your certificate returned in just a few weeks. If we miss the 28th then you will be waiting for another month. I will still take your paperwork via regular mail or hand delivered but a PDF is just fine.

Also, as a reminder, there are 2 forms involved in each category. The Statement of Qualification form (or SoQ) and the Record and Validation. The Record and Validation is really only for you to track that you have completed the requirements. The SoQ is the only form I need to submit to National.

Al always said, "Put the pencil to the paper" and get me your paperwork. If you have any questions or if I can help you in any way please feel free to contact me. My contact information is listed with the officers here in the Marker Lamp and on our website. **ML**

For more information on how to get involved in the Achievement Program, contact:

DUANE RICHARDSON, MMR
1122 Holland Drive, Garland, TX 75040
(972) 495-6375
duane@purgatoryanddevilriver.com

Division 3 Achievement Program Award Winners (and some show and tell) *photos and text by Ken Towery*

Both the August and September Division 3 meetings were held at the Christ the Servant Lutheran Church in Allen, TX. Several high profile and Merit awards were presented, with multiple awards going to three different Division 3 members. As well, a host of excellent Show & Tell items were on display both months showing the creative and detail-oriented skills of Division 3 modelers. No awards or Show & Tell models were presented at the abbreviated October meeting due to that meeting's condensed agenda so that members could attend the Texas Western Train Show that coincided with the meeting.



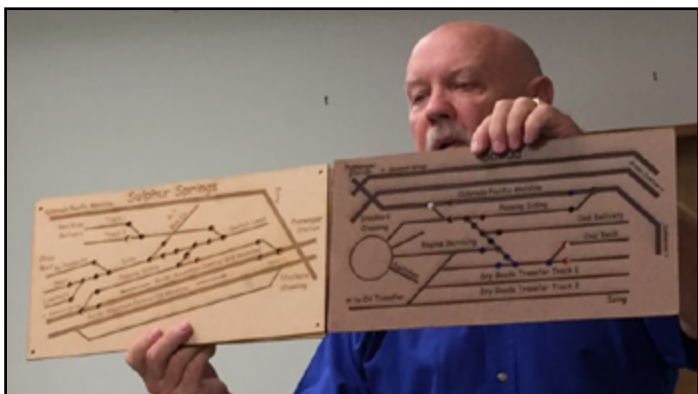
Alan Price receives two Merit Awards: one for a scratchbuilt flat car and the other for a water tank, both in G-scale.



Tom Browning earned four Merit Awards: one for a MOW tender, one for a sand tower structure, one for a Coal Barge, and the last one for a depot structure.



Joseph Sorenson received four Merit Awards, each one for a different structure he built.



Division 3 Director Jerry Hoverson displays two laser-engraved control panels that will be installing on his new layout.



Alan Price shows off his G-scale water tank.



*Joseph Sorenson holds up one of the new craftsman kit structures that he had recently built.
The Marker Lamp*



Jan Kutch talks about her scratchbuilt G-scale speeder shed that she is in the process of building.



A photo of an Arduino-controlled wig-wag grade crossing built by Roy Stockard.



Cody and Casey Akin update everyone on the progress of their highly-detailed, accurately-prototypical scratchbuilt locomotive project.



A photo showing the First Place award (and the model) for On-line Structures earned by Duane Richardson at the 2015 NMRA Regional Convention in Beaumont, TX.



Larry Swigart receives a prestigious 2015 President's Award for Leadership, Inspiration, Accomplishment, and Team Service to the NMRA Lone Star Region.



Not to be outdone, Donna Orr also receives a 2015 President's Award for her service and devotion to the NMRA Lone Star Region.



Boyd Patterson receives his Golden Spike Award.



Charles Goodrich showed off his weathered O-scale steam locomotive.



Here is the outstanding finished locomotive scratchbuilt by brothers Cody and Casey Akin, ready for the contest room.



Cody and Casey also displayed their scratchbuilt flatcar that will eventually be pulled by the newly constructed locomotive.



Tom Browning built this excellent G-scale boxcar that probably won't run prototypically on his Z-scale layout.



Duane Richardson earned these two award plaques at the 2015 National Narrow Gauge Convention in Houston: one for "Best S-Scale Model" and one for "First Place - Structure".

Director Reports



Cowcatcher Division 1

by Chris Atkins

chris@railroadermodelers.com

214.222.1285

cowcatcherdivision.com

Hi all, I hope by the time you read this the warm weather is behind us and you don't have any excuses not to get out and work on the layout. As I write this, the first ever Fall Plano train show is a recent memory. We didn't have the turnout that we have become accustomed to in January, but we have had 31 years to build that audience and the attendance at the September show was only a few hundred below our very best Ft. Worth shows in the last 15 years.

The Texas Western also had their second annual show in the Forest Hills neighborhood and it looked from the photos that a lot of Division 1 came to support them close to home. Hopefully you were able to make it.

The other big show of the fall season is the Cowtown Model Railroad Club's first show at Game On Arena Sports Center on November 14. This is the return of the LMRA show at a new location with a new name. More information can be found at <http://cmrrc.webs.com/>

I was glad to see several Division 1 members helping Larry Swigert out at the NMRA membership booth at the recent show in Plano. This is a great way to meet other modelers in the community and share some of your knowledge with people interested in getting into the hobby. There will be a table at the January show. Hopefully you can come help.

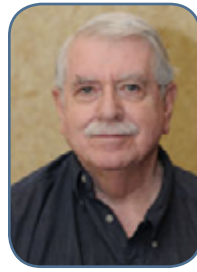
I am also thankful for the support of members like Don Murphey who presented a clinic on Installing Switch Machines. Efforts like this go directly to benefit Division 1 by helping us keep our obligation to the Council to give four clinics a year. We will need two more clinics in January. If you have a clinic you'd like to give, let me know. Also, I'd love to have you present your clinic at one of our meetings.

There are still plenty of jobs available for next year's convention. If you'd like to volunteer, call or email me and I will get in touch with the right guys. I know we could use some website help, if that is your secret weapon.

We had a meeting at the Texas Western on September 19th. I gave a clinic on using Free Software to Edit Background Photos. The meeting had about half the attendance of most of the meetings. It might have been because it was the same weekend as the train show in Temple. Thank you all for making it to our meetings. And for those that aren't coming, give me a call or email and let me know what changes you'd like to see.

I'm still looking for a place to hold regular meeting. If any of you know of a quiet place where we could meet on Saturday mornings, let me know. How does everyone feel about Saginaw or maybe I35W and Western Center?

In October, I went to the Twin Cities for Minn-Rail. It was a lot of fun as always and one of the highlights was getting to operate with Jim Hediger from Model Railroader. Jim has been a mainstay in the magazine since I have been a reader around 1980. Here is a photo of Jim running the Great Northern Western Star on John O'Brien's Great Northern Minot Division.



Bayou Division 2

by Rod Fredericks

fredericks.rod@gmail.com

225-939-0187

After a busy summer of conventions and model railroad activities, getting back to a more moderate pace has been most welcome. But what a summer it was!

The LSR Convention in Beaumont was great. The Beaumont guys put together a fine show. The hotel was excellent and the facilities all that one could hope for. I had a lot of fun and enjoyed presenting two clinics, one on wiring for DCC and a second on making trees. (I still don't have an explanation of the association between them other than both are important skills that make our hobby so amazing.)

Then there was the National Narrow Gauge Convention in Houston. This is an annual event held at different locations every year. It's always amazed me how grand these events are with no national organization to guide them. It's just a group of guys at that year's location who get together and put on a convention that attracts some thousand attendees from across the nation and internationally. And the guys conducting the Houston meet, many of them our friends and associates from the LSR, put on a show to revival any NNGC I've attended.

Activities in District 2 have been just as brisk over the summer. The Mid-South Model Railroad Club continues to host bi-monthly operating sessions. Operating sessions were also run on Art Houston's layout in Houma, the Crescent City Model Railroad Club in the New Orleans area, and Lake Area Model Railroaders (LAMRR) layout in Lake Charles, LA.

For this fall, the long planned series of Saturday morning, model railroading clinics will finally begin. The tentative date is December 5th. 10:00 am at the Jones Creek Library here in Baton Rouge, with clinics once a month thereafter. Because the library requires an open to the public policy, the first clinic will start with a brief introduction to our hobby, then go on to the general topic of tree making.

From there we hope to extend this series to other model railroading topics. Anyone interested in attending, either as presenters or learners, please contact me at fredericks.rod@gmail.com to get on the communication list and check if the date and time has not shifted.

So that's all for now. Happy model railroading.



North East Texas Division 3

by Jerry Hoverson, MMR

jhoverson@tx.rr.com

972.540.5315

Well, it looks like fall is finally here and we even have some rain in the forecast. It's been feast or famine around here, last spring we practically drowned then when the rains stopped it's been dry as a bone all summer long.

As I mentioned last time we finished our scratch building "speeder shed" project and asked for everyone to bring them in for a "Popular Vote" contest. Unfortunately, the number of speeder sheds that were brought in was a little underwhelming. However, those that did were voted on and Duane made some really nice plaques for the winners:



We judged all of them for the AP program also and everyone merited!

With that project complete we held a hands on clinic on what is becoming a lost art; How to apply decals. Thanks to Craig Tribuzi for donating the decals we used.

Then in September and October Gert "Speed" Muller lead a clinic on the "Arduino" being used for model railroad animation projects. This being a fairly "Techy" project I didn't expect that much participation. Boy was I wrong! Speed had over 35 members purchasing kits, bringing in their laptops, soldering, and even programing their own Arduinos to accomplish the animation task they desired. In fact, if external circumstances hadn't required us to stop each month those clinic might have gone on for hours. Hey Speed, this sounds like a great Hands on project for the next convention!



The Marker Lamp

Another new event for this time of year is that the first annual "Fall" Plano Train show was held. We'll still have our normal show in January but due to venue issues the normal Fort Worth based show had to be moved to Plano. That being said, welcome new NMRA members:

Gil Peterson
George Watson
Jim Shepherd
Bob Wilder
Dennis Rice
Calvin Roberts
Kevin Sims
And youth member Rial Smith

BTW, Rial already has 6 layouts, in various scales, that he has put up without any training at all! Here's an example of one of them, note the paper buildings.



Don't forget about our annual Holiday Party and Donna & Roger's complete with a White Elephant Gift Exchange (It's soooo much fun!).

Lot's more to come so "keep rolling down the tracks" and we'll see you next time!



CenTex Division 4

by Peter Kazmir

pakazmir@gmail.com

CenTexNMRA.org

It's been a busy fall for the Division. We held our last division meeting on August 29 at the Round Rock Library. Riley Triggs gave a great clinic about 3-D printing in model railroading. We also had our DCC Minute with Phil Sharpnack, Show and Tell Table, social time, and Deal or Duds. After the meeting we headed to Charles Etheredge's home to visit his *Texas & New Orleans*. More pictures from the meeting and layout tour are online at <http://centexnmra.org/meetings/2015-08.html>.

David Barrow, Pete Guy, Jack Merkel, Chuck Ellis, David Nicastro and others have hosted operating sessions during the past few months as well.

By the time you read this, we will have hosted our First Annual Cen-Tex Division NMRA Meet in Austin. The meet included several clinics (including fantastic presentations by out-of-division members Chuck Lind, Loren Neufeld, Duane Richardson, and Tom Pearson), experts to help you get started and keep going, plenty of social time, a contest and exhibition, an Austin-area layout tour (featuring over 20 layouts!) and operating sessions on Friday and Sunday. We will have photos and more in the next Marker Lamp. We plan to make this an annual fall event, opposite the spring Austin Model Railroad Jamboree which will return in 2017.

Starting in January, our division meetings will be changing slightly. We'll be moving to a new schedule (every other month, on a set Saturday of the month), a new location, and we'll be hosting two clinics per meeting (one for beginners, in parallel). We'll also be changing to a group layout tour format so that everyone has an opportunity to visit each other's layouts throughout the year. Look for more details soon on our web site, <http://centexnmra.org>.



Division 5

by Dave Lamberts
DavidWL1944@aol.com
 806.792.7244

The Lubbock Model Railroad Association has been interested in what we call HO table top modules. They consist of a module 28 inches deep by 19.5 inches across the front. The base is a plywood board set on a box 4 inches high. Here is the cool part – NO LEGS. To set up the modules we just set them on flat top tables. Today we had a play day at the church where we meet and had ten table top modules connected to allow running of trains all afternoon. The members like them because they are small and can actually be completed.

I think the N scale modelers were the first to describe table top modules. I have the exact specifications for building one of these modules. If interested let me know, and I will mail them to you.



Division 6

by Kevin Bergeman
kevin.bergeman@gmail.com
 210.488.4370

Two major events occurred in the South Texas Division this past quarter. AMRE's 27th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 3 – 4, 2015 and NBRM's 7th Annual Fall Train Show, Oct 31 – Nov 1, 2015.

As I predicted in my last report it was a very busy month. Clubs exhibiting at the shows included the Texas Brick Railroad (Lego), the New Braunfels Railroad Museum (Lionel), Aust-N-Trak (N-TRAK), Gulf Western Modular Railroad Society (HO), TexLUG (Lego). Nathan Oxhandler was at the New Braunfels show as an individual running several loops of G gauge trains. Also at New Braunfels was a large, multi-club T-TRAK (N scale) layout; participating clubs included SANTRAK, NBRM, Aust-N-Trak and a couple of individual modelers whose names I can't remember (sorry). With all those contributors, there was a 6 scale mile mainline run.

Up-coming events include SAMRA's 40th Annual Jamboree & Train Show, January 30 & 31, 2016 and the World's Greatest Hobby Show, February 20 & 21, 2016 (both in San Antonio); along with the NBRM's 28th Annual Train Show Jamboree, April 9 & 10, 2016 in New Braunfels.

On a sad note, for those of you who did not hear long time model railroader and South Texas Division members Jim Ladd passed away in October. His love of this hobby and his mentorship will be sorely missed.





Division 7

by Don Kimmell
elf4kcs@mac.com
318.798.7718

Greetings again from NW Louisiana. I hope everyone is having a productive season. First off, upcoming events.

The folks around Longview are talking about a one-day show/swap meet sometime in March 16'. I should know a bit more next month.

The Tyler Cotton Belt Tap is planning on their show again in April 16'. Again, more to follow.

Now something for those folks down in the southern part of the LSR.... KCS is bring their Holiday Express to a number of "local" towns come Nov-Dec.

Date	Town
27 Nov	DeRidder, LA
28 Nov	Beaumont, TX
29 Nov	Kendleton, TX
30 Nov	El Campo, TX
1 Dec	Victoria, TX
2 Dec	Granado, TX
3 Dec	Wharton, TX
4 Dec	Shreveport, LA

The "posted" start time is 4:00pm, but...they have been known to start a "bit early", like 3:30pm, but don't say I said so!

If you are in the area, and don't mind a bit of a wait, the Holiday Express is really something to see, I'm not saying that cause I get to "play" with it, but it really is pretty neat! Bring the family, you will gain many brownie points if you do so!!

Due to prior commitments, I will not be elfing until we head north from Shreveport, yea, I know, the "cold" leg again! Well, I have accumulated the necessary gear to shiver on through. More to follow in the "Elf Saga" come January '16.

From what I heard, the folks that attended the Beaumont Convention in July had a great time. While the attendance was down a bit, the folks George and Steven had working more than made up for that. I did not attend, was out in Oregon at a family happening, but did get some train time in. If you are around Hood River, try the Mt. Hood Scenic, they have some truly awe-inspiring country, and orchards, wow, there is a tremendous number of fruit orchards there, did you know that there are 7 varieties of Pears? Well, there are, or so I was told by one grower. Nice place to visit.

With me being there in the Portland area in July, I found it a bit problematic to try to sell the other board member, going back there in August! But, I understand one of our "locals" did attend the Nationals, and had a

great time, there was almost too much to see and do! Having attended a couple, I do have to agree with him. But it sure is fun being around that many model railroaders at one time in one place.

Well, that is about all I have, so ...go Play Trains!



Texas Gulf Division 8

by Jim Lemond
jimlem@verzion.net

No report.

Chair Reports



Nominations

by Blake Bogs

superchief1520@gmail.com

(713) 254-7447

Howdy Y'all, how time flies when you are having fun! Summer is over and I am now attending Sam Houston State for the next 2-3 years. It seems just yesterday, I joined the Nomination Committee and took over the position of Nomination Chair. As times are changing so quickly, it reminds me of a new song I heard called "Old Boots, New Dirt" by Jason Aldean.

In the song, Jason describes a person moving on from a woman and going to a new place, with his same old boots. But, if you put this song in the context of the LSR, we are now moving into new territory, with the same region of the LSR. We are still the LSR, but every year our members are slowly growing older so we have to recruit younger individuals to join our organization. How do we do this? We have to make a good impression and we have to adapt more to the younger generation. LSR is currently geared more towards the older generation. We have conventions which are expensive and we have very few hands-on clinics. But, as you can tell, the LSR is trying to slowly gear itself towards the younger generation.

I have recently have been helping a 9 year old, Josh, get started in model railroading, and it has completely changed my mind on how to encourage youth to get involved. The approach a lot of model railroaders (and me before the experience) involves teaching the youth the ins and outs about how to lay track, make a control panel, maintain locomotives, put sound in an engine, and other techniques. But, instead we need to start out small and go big. At 9 years old, all you want to do is play trains. If we want to make our meetings and conventions youth oriented where youth will come we need to follow these steps:

1. After every train show or at least once a year, have an introductory model railroading 101. Division 3 has done this and has had great success! At this meeting don't cover anything too long. Remember if there are young kids, the last thing you want to do is make them feel like they are class again. Include hands on clinics to show "Model Railroading is FUN!!!!!" Finally, if you cover





the AP program, make it short and sweet. Most kids won't want to do the AP program when they start model railroading.

2. At the first meeting they come to, have the family introduce themselves. First impressions are everything! We have to make the family feel welcome or they won't come back. Make sure your members introduce themselves.

3. Make sure your members treat the kids like you would any other person. I've seen it before and I have experience it; there are members in the LSR and other organization that treat kids like kids. They don't treat them like equals and they especially don't treat them like future model railroaders. These kids are our future. You do have to come down to their level on skills, but just treat them as your equal.

4. Put more hands-on clinics in the mix. Youth love these clinics! If you have a clinic that is not hands-on, make it hands-on. For example, let's say you are doing a clinic on 101 switching. This would normally not be a hands-on clinic unless you have a member bring some flex track or a switching layout and allow the attendees to learn and practice how to switch. A kid will love this.

5. Invite the young modeler over to run on your layout. Let them create their own train and then pick their own locomotive. Let them go crazy (ok not as crazy as Larry Swagart) and have a little bit of fun! When Josh came over, I let him make his train. I told him to pick out how many cars he wanted and a caboose and he had a blast. I let him pick up the cars and put them on the track.

You can teach a kid a lot about model railroading just by doing this. You can teach them the car names, what the railroad names stand for, what the paint schemes are, and finally you can teach them how to put the trains on the track and what happens if it derails. Also, make sure

it's a sound engine that the youth has to choose from. Sound makes all the difference!!!!

6. Finally, give them model railroading magazines. I let Josh pick out 5 issues out of the extras I have. When he finishes those, I will give him more to read.

This is just the beginning of what we can do for youth! There is so much more we can do for them. Just remember everything you do for a youth is an impression that can last for a lifetime. Many people know I talk about Gary Abramski often. Gary gave me my first locomotive. That impression made such an impact on my life, that he is still one of my best friends and a person I still frequently talk to when I get stumped on a problem.

One problem model railroaders experience as a community is that trains are expensive. If you look around, you will see the cheapest locomotive you can find at a hobby shop is around \$79. An Athearn starter sets are now around \$200 retail. My recommendation is this: help them get started and help them create their own starter set. Find 3-4 Athearn Blue Box kits, a caboose, a mrc 1520 transformer, Bachmann track, and a decent locomotive. Try not to get an AHM, Tyco, old Athearn or something else.

It would be worth helping them find a good locomotive or let one of your locomotives go for a little bit less than what you paid for it. I recommend the new Athearn Starter Set F7 locomotive (Santa Fe #310). You can find them on ebay for \$30. Also, the old Athearn Warbonnet set is a great set if you can find it for less than \$60 with shipping.

Once you collect all of the supplies, change the Kadee couplers and lube the locomotive. This will allow them to how fun without worrying about their train's uncoupling. I did this exact same thing for Josh, except I had an Athearn transformer. This helped keep this family on a



budget and allowed him to have the time on his life with his train set.

Another thing I did for him is give him some buildings I was given a while back. If you have Bachmann or AHM kits that you aren't using or not going to use, give them to the modeler. It might be a little above his skill level, but he can have his parents help him. Then once they are done with the buildings have them bring them to the meeting to show, then give him an award for finishing the building and for all his work.

Finally, if you work with young modelers, you just volunteered on behalf on the NMRA and LSR. And, if you can volunteer with youth, then you can volunteer for office! The LSR needs people to step up and run for office. Yes, I say the same thing every single issue, but we need volunteers!

On another note, Petticoat Junction is now once again at our old location, meeting at Valley Ranch BBQ at 22548 TX-249 Houston, TX 77070. We have had a lot of great clinics lately. In May, Chuck Lind did a clinic on scenery. In June, Denny McGonigle did a clinic on Building Wood Structures.

In July, I did a clinic on my trip to Virginia and North Carolina last year. In August, Bob LaRoe did a clinic on Maine railroads. In September, Paul Cezak did a clinic on 3D printing. In October, Mr. Dave presented a clinic on German Railroads. Then in November, we had our monthly open house!

In May, we unfortunately lost an important member of our society. Our Friend and Petticoat Junction member, Ken Walden, passed away suddenly while volunteering at the Tomball Depot. His death shocked many of us as Ken was an excellent friend to all of us! Ken volunteered at the depot for at least the last 6 years (if not more). His legacy has not been forgotten as the city of Tomball has recently





created a bronze statue of Ken that overlooks, from The Tomball Depot, the future site of the historic railroad museum.

The depot has been closed for the last several months since Ken's passing, but John Lockwood has recently taken Ken's position and has been allowing people to come in the depot once again.

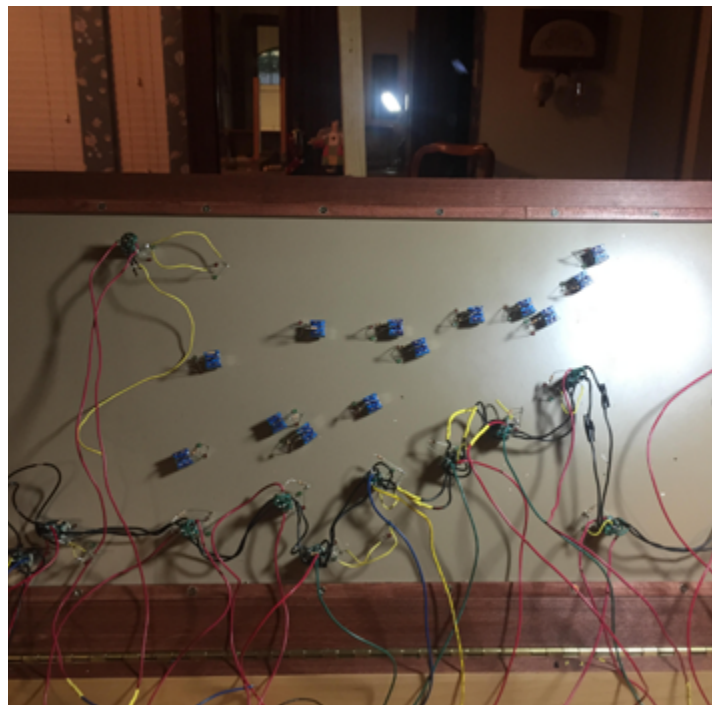


John Lockwood (left) and friends. (photo by Mr Dave)

I also recently made progress on my layout! I finally got my turntable and switch panel done before the Narrow Gauge convention! This was an extreme learning experience for me, but with a great teacher like my dad, Barry Bogs, it went fast (well about as fast as a turtle walks) and easy (if you call like 5 burns from a soldering iron easy).

I'm continuing to work on my layout to get it ready for future open houses and because I'm ready to have a second level on my layout for my narrow gauge to really run. Attached are the plans for my upper level. It will feature a Durango roundhouse and station, as well as a switchback going behind Durango up to an unnamed town.

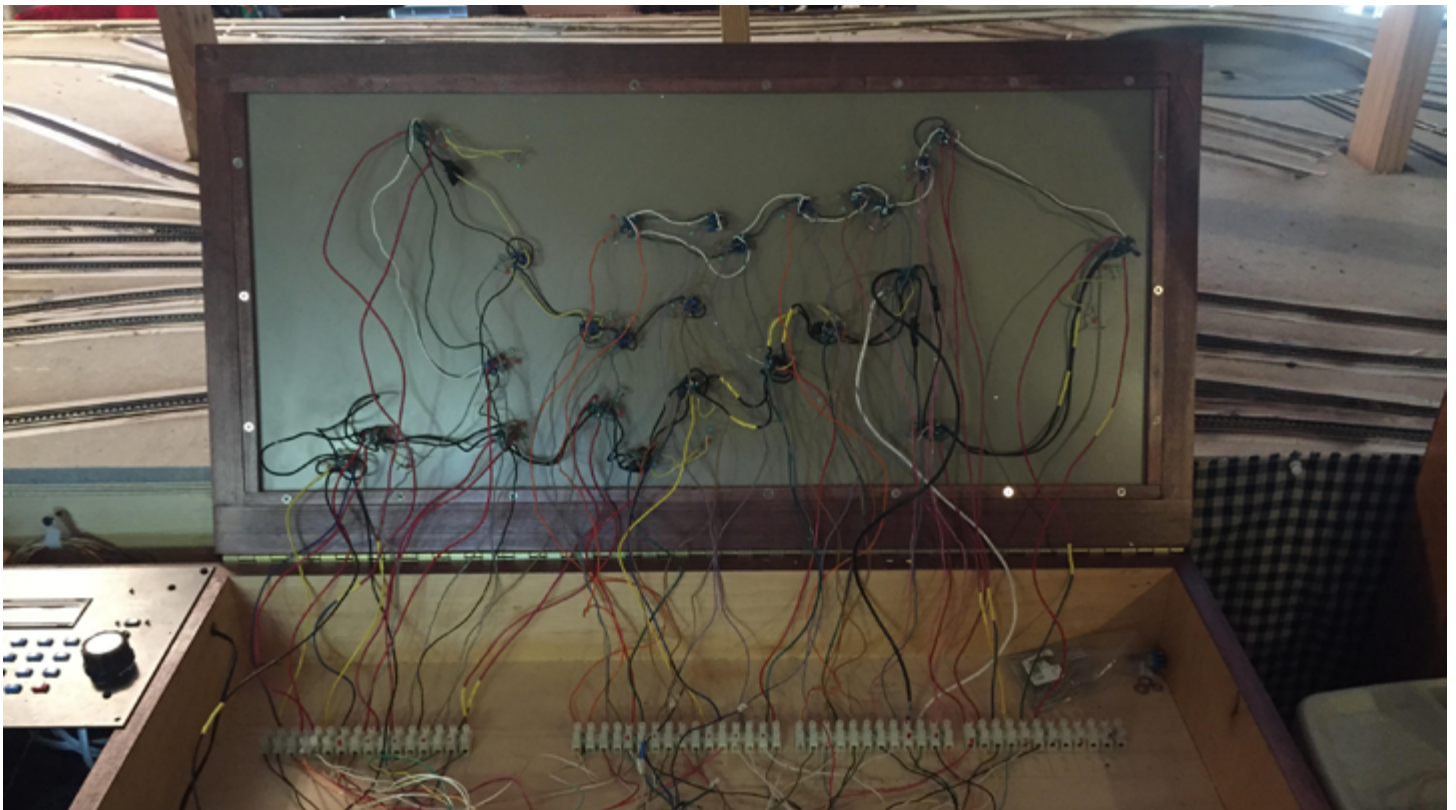
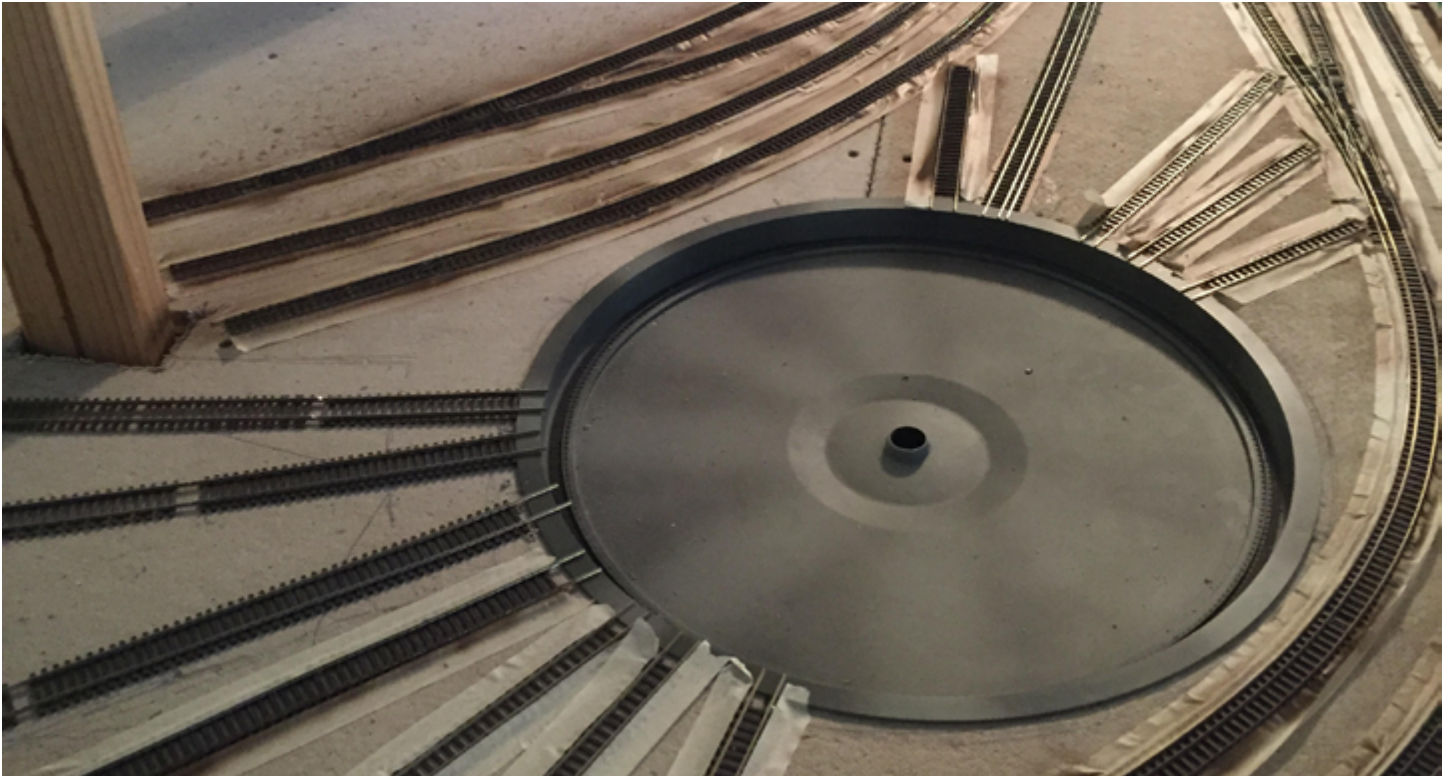
I will follow up with my progress in my next marker lamp article. All in all this has been a fun layout to build,



although I highly don't recommend building a dual gauge layout for your first layout.

But hey! As my dad constantly reminds me, model railroading is fun, especially when you burn yourself while soldering, and wiring a switch, and when your trains derail during open house and when you...

Last but not least, the nomination period began on October 15 and will close December 18th. If you have not already been contacted by me or a member of the nomination committee, please shoot me an email at super-chief1520@gmail.com! **ML**





Treasurer
by Donna Orr
dlo-rls@sbcglobal.net
 (972) 342-8598

Financial Report July

For the First Fiscal Quarter of 2015/2016

Beginning Balance 05/01/2015

LSR Checking Account	\$ 5,019.01
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,358.90
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$10,005.43
Acct receivable for 2015 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Acct Receivable for 2016 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$39,383.34

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clark Award \$570

LSR Proceeds

Vanguard CD Fund Interest	\$ 1.09
Vanguard Convention Fund Interest	\$.54
Convention mailing	\$ 300.00
Total Proceeds	\$ 301.63

LSR Disbursements

Contest Expenses	\$ 341.64
Total Disbursements	\$ 341.64

Net Proceeds/ Disbursements \$ -40.01

Ending Balance 07/31/2015

LSR Checking Accounts Total	\$ 4,977.37
Vanguard CD Fund	\$ 20,359.99
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$ 10,005.97
Acct receivable for 2015 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Acct receivable for 2016 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$ 39,343.33

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clarke Award \$ 570.00

Financial Report October

For the Second Fiscal Quarter of 2015/2016

Beginning Balance 08/01/2015

LSR Checking Account	\$ 4,977.37
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,359.99
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$10,005.97
Acct receivable for 2015 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Acct Receivable for 2016 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$39,343.33

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clark Award \$570

LSR Proceeds

Vanguard CD Fund Interest	\$ 3.27
Vanguard Convention Fund Interest	\$ 1.56
NMRA membership rebate	\$ 953.00
Convention membership rebate	\$ 154.00
Transfer from Vanguard convention Fund	\$ 500.00
Pike Ads	\$ 16.00
Total Proceeds	\$ 1,627.83

LSR Disbursements

BOD meeting copying	\$ 32.46
Convention loss	\$ 500.00
Historian Expenses	\$ 15.16
Election printing and mailing	\$ 35.00
Total Disbursements	\$ 582.62

Net Proceeds/ Disbursements \$ 1,045.21

Ending Balance 09/31/2015

LSR Checking Accounts Total	\$ 6,017.75
Vanguard CD Fund	\$20,363.26
Vanguard Convention Fund	\$ 9,507.53
Acct receivable for 2016 Convention	\$ 2,000.00
Total LSR Net Worth	\$37,888.54

Not included in Total LSR Net Worth

Funds for the Bob Clarke Award \$ 570.00



Membership Report

by Larry Swigert, MMR

LS4Results@aol.com

This issue I thought it would be interesting to compare the current total membership of each LSR Division to the same time last year.

DIVISION	2014	2015
1- Ft. Worth area	166	167
2- New Orleans area	106	111
3- Dallas area	201	224
4- Austin area	135	129
5- Lubbock area	39	58
6- San Antonio area	110	92
7- Shreveport area	22	24
8- Houston area	240	253
TOTAL	1019	1058

So the good news is that the LSR continues to grow!

We would like to introduce these new NMRA Lone Star Region members:

Division 1 (Ft. Worth area)

Martin Thigpen
Mark Dreier
David Spore
Roger Johnson
Ian Nance
Bob Wilder
Jim Shepherd

Division 2 (New Orleans area)

Clifford Johnson
Andrew Forcade

Division 3 (Dallas area)

Dennis Agren
Gil Peterson
Lorenzo Castillo
George C. Watson
Tiffany Smith
Rial Smith
Kevin Sims
Jim Manley
David Mock
David Moore
Angela Moore
Dennis Rice
Calvin Roberts
Chris Dorsey

Division 8 (Houston Area)

Jana Spring

We welcome all of you to the NMRA, Lone Star Region.
ENJOY THE JOURNEY !



**Click to join the Lone Star
Region and the NMRA
at nmra.org**

Cowcatcher
Magazine

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Tom Browning MMR, Owner
5923 Over Downs Circle
Dallas, Texas 75230-4039

214-692-9784

thomascb2004@yahoo.com



Tall Pine Lumber Company RR
West Coast Logging in On3
Chuck & Laurie Lind
3680 County Road 324
Navasota, Texas 77868
979-219-3305

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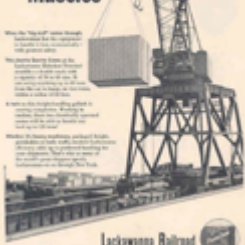
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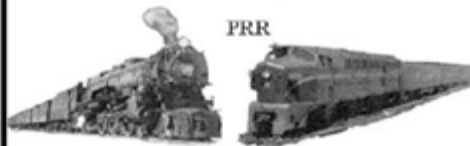


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